

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Official Action mailed May 19, 2006.

In the present paper, claims 50, 55, 58 and 63 have been amended, and claims 53, 54, 61 and 62 have been canceled. Claims 1-16 were cancelled in a previous paper, and claims 17-49 have been withdrawn as a result of an earlier restriction requirement. Claims 50-52, 55-60 and 63-65 remain in the case, and are presented for the Examiner's consideration in view of the following remarks.

The Present Invention

The Applicants have invented a system for real-time updating of shipping addresses by the address owners, and real-time retrieval of those addresses by shippers of goods. In a simple embodiment of the invention, a consumer orders a widget from an Internet merchant, and, in place of a shipping address in the ordering form, the consumer places a network pointer to the an address updating service according to the invention. When a shipper is ready to deliver the widget, the shipper follows the pointer to a current address where the widget can be shipped. The consumer has the ability to enter multiple addresses and corresponding time periods when the consumer will be at those addresses.

An exemplary embodiment of the invention is claimed in amended claim 50, which is directed to a method for processing an order placed by an address owner to a merchant for merchandise. The method includes the steps of receiving from the merchant a query to an online address directory, the directory containing at least one address of the address owner and, for each address of the address owner, a date range during which said address is effective, the query containing an address owner ID, and a shipping delivery date; determining from the address

directory, a shipping address of the address owner that is effective on the delivery date; and transmitting to the merchant, information for printing a coded shipping label, the label readable by a shipper and not by the merchant, the label containing the address of the address owner valid on the delivery date; transmitting to the shipper a second key for decoding the shipping label to obtain the shipping address for the address owner on the delivery date.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. M.P.E.P. § 2143.03 (*citing In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974)).

The Examiner has rejected claims 50-65 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0178364 to Weiss (“Weiss”). Applicants have amended claims 50 and 58 by incorporating in those claims limitations originally presented in claims 54 and 62. Applicants submit that the amended claims are patentable over Weiss because several claim limitations, as set forth below, are not taught or suggested by the Weiss disclosure.

Weiss discloses a method and apparatus directed to securely storing and disseminating information regarding individuals (see the Abstract). One embodiment of Weiss is the use of a secure database to deliver mail to a user (see Weiss at paras. [0088]-[0092]; FIG. 11). Specifically, the sender of a parcel retrieves a user’s “address code” from the database, and prints that code on the parcel (Weiss at [0091]). The delivery service accesses the secure database using that address code, and retrieves the address directly from the database (Weiss at [0092]). The delivery service then prints an address label and/or delivers the package.

In the method of the present invention, as claimed in amended claim 50, the merchant prints a label that “contain[s] the address of the address owner valid on the delivery date” (present application, claim 50). The label is coded, and is not readable by the merchant. A key transmitted to the shipper permits the shipper to decode the shipping label to obtain the shipping address.

The Weiss system differs from the system claimed in amended claim 50 in at least two ways:

First, the Weiss system does not transmit to the merchant, information for printing a shipping label “containing the address of the owner valid on the delivery date,” as required by claim 50. Instead, the information transmitted to the merchant is an “address code” of the user. The address of the owner, coded or uncoded, is not transmitted to the merchant (Weiss at [0091]), but is instead transmitted directly to the shipper (Weiss at [0092]).

Second, the Weiss system does not transmit to the shipper “a second key for decoding the shipping label to obtain the shipping address for the owner on the delivery date,” as required by claim 50. Instead, the database of Weiss transmits the address information itself to the shipper, in response to receiving the address code obtained by the shipper from the printed label (Weiss at [0092]).

Put another way, in the Weiss system, a shipper transmits the address code to the secure database, and then retrieves the address information. In contrast, the address information in the presently claimed system is included in the shipping label itself, and the shipper retrieves a key to decode that information.

The system of the present invention increases the security of the system. To steal an address, an adverse party impersonating the shipper in the presently-claimed system would need

the physical parcel with the encoded label containing the address information. In contrast, that adverse party attempting to break the Weiss system by impersonating the shipper would need only the code on the package to retrieve the address from the database.

Applicants therefore submit that, because Weiss does not teach or suggest at least the two limitations of claim 50 discussed above, that claim 50 is patentable over that reference. Applicants further submit that claims 51, 52 and 55-57, which depend from claim 50, are patentable for at least the same reasons. Claims 58-60 and 63-65 contain limitations similar to the above-discussed claims, and are also asserted to be patentable for the same reasons.

Conclusion

Applicants therefore respectfully assert that all the claims in the case are now in condition for allowance, and earnestly request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowance.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the present case, the Examiner should not hesitate in contacting the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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